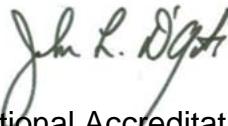
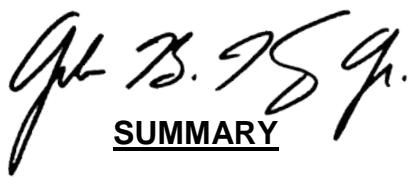




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

To: Higher Education Committee
From: John L. D'Agati 
Subject: Renewal of Institutional Accreditation: Utica School of Commerce
Date: June 11, 2012

Authorizations:



SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents grant renewal of accreditation to Utica School of Commerce?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the Higher Education Committee at its June 2012 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken. It will then come before the full Board at its June 2012 meeting for final action.

Background Information

The Utica School of Commerce is a proprietary institution offering two year programs in the field of Business. The college received permission to award the A.O.S. degree in 1972 and the A.A.S. degree in 1998. The college has been institutionally accredited by the Regents since 1972. The most recent renewal of accreditation was in 2001, for a period of ten years. On May 23, 2011, the Department administratively extended the term of accreditation from November 9, 2011 to November 8, 2012.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents renew the institutional accreditation of the Utica School of Commerce for a period of ten years, with the condition that all recommendations in the report be met by May 22, 2014, with a progress report due within two years of the date of Regents action on this application for renewal of accreditation.

Regents with a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest on this application are asked to recuse themselves from participating in the deliberation and decision.

Attachment

Information in Support of Recommendation

Peer Review Visit

In preparation for a visit by a peer review team, the Utica School of Commerce, (USC) submitted a self-study following the requirements for self-studies in the Handbook of Institutional Accreditation. On April 5-6, 2011, a team of peers (Team) approved by the Department, along with Department staff, conducted a site visit to the college to assess compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation. During the visit, the Team interviewed faculty, administrators, staff, and students. The team also inspected classrooms, administrative offices, and library facilities, visited classes, and reviewed syllabi as well as a random sampling of student work. The Team visited each of the three institutional locations (in Utica, Oneonta, and Canastota) of the USC during this review visit.

The Team found the Utica School of Commerce to be in substantial compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation, and recommended renewal of institutional accreditation for ten years. The Team recommended that the institution additionally focus on the development of student learning outcomes and their assessment and on faculty development to this end, and provide an interim report on development in cited area. Specific recommendations of the peer review team were:

Curriculum:

1. Continue to develop strategies and attendant practices to develop skills required for college-level performance.
2. Continue to develop and use assessment rubrics at the course and assignment level.
3. Continue to embed the identified general education outcomes expectations across the curriculum.
4. Continue to conduct course comparability analysis with other institutions and make appropriate adjustments to assure transfer of credit.
5. Continue to strengthen training of faculty in distance education pedagogy, including its use in hybrid or blended courses.

Faculty:

1. Incorporate a pedagogical development component into faculty meetings and other venues for all faculty and implement a professional growth process for each full-time faculty member.
2. Include the matters cited in the preceding recommendations in the evaluation of faculty.

Resources:

1. Explore the addition of educational interactive technology as a means of upgrading instructional equipment and enhancing classroom presentation and interactions.
2. Enhance the limited office space for faculty at the branch campuses.

Library:

1. Strengthen the use of resources available through the library in instruction generally, and in particular in the development of analytical and communication skills.
2. Enhance the library/learning centers at the branch campuses.

Support Services:

1. Determine initiatives deemed most likely to be effective in bringing students to a college skills level and implement them.

The Department transmitted the draft compliance review report to USC for review and comment. The college accepted the draft report's recommendations and included evidence that the improvements recommended are ongoing or planned. Based on the self-study and the college's response, the Department concurred with the Team's recommendation.

Regents Advisory Council (RAC) Review

As required by Subpart 4-1 of the Regents Rules, the Department transmitted the final compliance review report for consideration by the Regents Advisory Council on Institutional Accreditation. (The RAC is established in §3.12(d) of the *Rules of the Board of Regents* "to review applications for accreditation and renewal of accreditation pursuant to Part 4 of this Title, and such other matters as the department may ask it to review, and make recommendations to the Regents and the commissioner based on its review.")

On May 17, 2012, the Advisory Council met to consider Utica School of Commerce's application. In a public meeting, the Council met with the college's Executive Vice President of Academics and Department staff. RAC members discussed their observations and asked questions of the institution's representative. The Council then voted unanimously to recommend renewal of institutional accreditation for ten years, with the condition that all recommendations in the report be satisfactorily addressed with a progress report within two years of Regents action on this application for renewal of accreditation.

Commissioner's Review

Neither the Utica School of Commerce nor the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education appealed the Advisory Council's recommendation. Therefore, pursuant to Subpart 4-1, the Commissioner adopted the Council's recommendation as his recommendation to the Board of Regents.

The attachment to this item sets forth the range of accreditation actions authorized under Subpart 4-1 of the *Rules of the Board of Regents*.

Rules of the Board of Regents

Subpart 4-1, Voluntary Institutional Accreditation for Title IV Purposes

§4-1.2 Definitions.

As used in the Subpart:

- (a) *Accreditation* means the status of public recognition that the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents grant to an educational institution that meets the standards and requirements prescribed in this Subpart.
- (b) *Accreditation action* means accreditation, accreditation with conditions, probationary accreditation, approval of substantive changes in the scope of accreditation, and denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation.
- (c) *Accreditation with conditions* means accreditation that requires the institution to take steps to remedy issues raised in a review for accreditation, and provide reports and/or submit to site visits concerning such issues, provided that such issues do not materially affect the institution's substantial compliance with the standards and requirements for accreditation.
- (d) *Adverse action* or *adverse accreditation action* means suspension, withdrawal, denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation or preaccreditation.
- (q) *Probationary accreditation* means accreditation for a period of time, not to exceed two years, during which the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation through corrective action.